

UNCLAS SECTION 01 OF 03 BAGHDAD 003823

SIPDIS

STATE FOR INR/R/MR, NEA/PPD, NEA/PPA, NEA/AGS, INR/IZ, INR/P

E.O. 12958: N/A

TAGS: [OPRC](#) [KMDR](#) [KPAO](#) [IZ](#) [BAGHDAD](#)

SUBJECT: MEDIA REACTION: IRAQI GOVERNMENT, CONSTITUTION, TAL AFAR; BAGHDAD

SUMMARY: Discussion on the Constitution and Terrorism were the major editorial themes of the daily newspapers on September 15, 2005. END SUMMARY.

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TABLE OF CONTENTS

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- [1A. "A Country of Crises" \(Az-Zaman, 9/15\)](#)
- [1B. "Kadhimya and Sho'la Neighborhoods and the Tamim Tribe" \(Al-Adala, 9/15\)](#)
- [1C. "The Irrational Media Coverage of Othman Al-Obeidi" \(Al-Mashriq, 9/15\)](#)
- [1D. "Untitled" \(Dar Al-Salam, 9/15\)](#)
- [1E. "Foreign Company Closes BIAP. Why?" \(Baghdad, 9/15\)](#)

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SELECTED COMMENTARIES

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[1A. "A Country of Crises"](#)  
(Az-Zaman, independent, lately anti coalition, published this page-eight editorial by Rahman Meshawi)

"Iraqi citizens are extremely lucky in what political leaders (during interviews) like to call 'The New Iraq.' After being blessed by God with patience and the ability to endure all sorts of weather conditions and impossible crisis that require the government's sedative explanations of difficulties caused by 'former regime elements:' power crises, fuel crises, water crises, crises with corruption, an unemployment crisis, and traffic crises, in addition to other escalating crises that have taken root under the era of the former regime. Those would include: the security crisis, sewage crises, and a crisis with food rationing items.

"But the main problem isn't these crises themselves or the fact that, according to some political geniuses, they'll need 5 - 10 years to be solved, but it is the fear of those holding positions of power to maintain the courage to resign when that becomes an item of last resort-as we usually see happen in democratic countries after incidents causing losses of life or economic devastation.

"So this crisis will determine whether we head towards democracy or tyranny. Thank God that all governments that have assumed power since the toppling of the former regime until the coming elections are following the White House's map, and only God knows what could happen if the elected government strengthens its grip on power. Some crises might end while others might be created, but again, we always have the 'former regime' to blame."

[1B. "Kadhimya and Sho'la Neighborhoods and the Tamim Tribe"](#)  
(Al-Adala, no bias, affiliated with SCIRI led by Abdul Aziz Al-Hakim, published this page-three editorial by Dr. Ali Khalif)

"Terrorists committed a horrible crime in the crowded Al-Uroba quarter of the Kadhimya neighborhood-a place where day laborers mass to eek out their daily existence. All Iraqis know that this is a place where impoverished families live and the terrorists and zealots have multiplied their crimes by targeting the innocent of the Sho'la and Al-Adil neighborhoods as well. In addition, they executed 17 innocent Iraqis from the [Shi'a] Tamim tribe and did so in a public square in the Al-Taji quarter [a Sunni district].

"Many other crimes were perpetrated by terrorists and zealots yesterday resulting in 150 martyrs and many others injured. My question is: what will the people who joined the terrorists and used guns instead of participating in the political process say to the world? And what will those who condemned the government's military operations against terrorism say to the world?

"The events of yesterday show that there are many terrorists in Baghdad, but the bigger problem that Iraqis face is the incubators, and those who incite terrorism. So why doesn't the government question those who condemn its actions against terrorists? As a matter of fact, the government should arrest those who release statements inciting terrorism and be firm with those playing games to legitimize

terrorism; by disrupting their environment the government could lessen their appeal.

"So, after all of the sacrifices that our people made and still make, should we accept demands to strike debathification from the constitution and heed the calls for postponing reconciliation? And after all the irresponsible statements by those with no regard for Iraqi life, should we listen to their appeals to dissolve the National Assembly?

"We are faced with a severe war waged by honest Iraqis on one side and on the other it is terrorists, zealots, former regime elements and the privileged who seek to reclaim their glory. Some of them enjoy shedding the blood of others while others simply reject federalism.

"Many of those people who were killed in Kadhimya yesterday came from southern governorates (especially Kut) to Baghdad for work because there are no jobs in their provinces. Those who reject federalism intend on making the people of the south servants and humiliating them as Saddam and his followers did—they keep holding grudges.

We see on television that some of those who believe in sectarianism and regard themselves as educated are trying to find justification for killing the poor. Though terrorists may try they will not be able to terminate Iraqis—their predecessors tried in the past and failed to eliminate the Shi'a and today they will fail again because the Shi'a are committed to their principles."

**1C.** "The Irrational Media Coverage of Othman Al-Obeidi"  
(Al-Mashriq, independent, no bias published this page-four editorial by Amr Al-Mijar)

"A colleague of mine has previously addressed this subject which I believe is a very important one to write about and should be taken into consideration by all media whose coverage of this story was far from reality. What we're talking about here is the 'simple' or emotional treatment of the young Iraqi man who saved many Iraqis from drowning during the A'emma bridge incident, the martyr Othman Al-Obeidi.

"Many media organizations went on to say that Al-Obeidi 'set an example for national unity' and 'cemented brotherhood' among Iraqis; that could be said about two hostile countries with deep differences separating them. In addition there were statements about how such noble courage contributed to restoring a sense of fraternity that has been lost due to continuous rivalry. So does this apply to Iraqis?!"

"There's no doubt that the conditions Iraq is enduring make it necessary to invest in any honorable example to further strengthen bonds between Iraqis, but to portray this example as a unique one, never before presented, is a true media catastrophe.

And here, I would like to pose the question, did the Iraqis who went to defend Palestine in 1948 ask each other what religion or sect they belonged to and did they consider that when their blood mixed on the battlefield and they carried the wounded among them?

Did Iraqi cities segregate people of different backgrounds by barricades that were only removed on April 9, 2003? The actions of the heroic martyr Othman Al-Obeidi are actions of an Iraqi and need no sectarian or political spin."

**1D.** "Untitled"  
(The weekly Dar Al-Salam, affiliated with the Iraqi Islamic Party, published this front-page unattributed editorial about the constitution)

"It's very important for general opinion in Iraq and abroad to understand that our reasons for objecting to some items in the draft constitution have nothing to do with sectarian, political, or circumstantial considerations as alleged by some, but is based on Islamic and patriotic considerations intended to support the interests of Iraqi people.

"These considerations have always formed the basis for any approval or rejection, and we have always reflected an Islamic national platform, not a sectarian one, and if some see our position as a reflection of the Sunni position, that's fine because Sunnis in Iraq are like other patriotic groups eager to preserve the unity of Iraqis and the social bonds of their society, which in the end, is an Islamic policy not restricted to Sunnis only.

We're glad to find influential groups and segments in Iraqi society taking the same stance which confirms the righteousness of our perspective and underscores the fact that different Iraqi groups sense the same danger and formulated their reaction on the same Islamic and national basis."

**1E.** "Foreign Company Closes BIAP. Why?"  
(Baghdad newspaper, affiliated with pro-coalition Wifaq party, published this page-six editorial by Adil Al-Ardawi)  
"Are you familiar with the bitterness, anxiety, and stress

felt by a traveler who has packed his bags and reached Baghdad International Airport after taking that most dangerous route with death staring one down, to finally hear upon reaching the terminal that his flight has been canceled.

"It's not very easy to hear the staff announce the cancellation of the flight especially when it's for no logical reason which is exactly what happened a few days ago when the British-based Global closed BIAP claiming the Ministry of Transportation hadn't paid the company for the last two months leading to a suspension of flights on Sep. 8 and 9. The problem was finally solved after intervention from the Ministry of Transportation and exhausting negotiations with the British company which is only one of many companies we have to tolerate.

"We would like to ask the Ministry of Transportation and the Civil Aviation Department about the former staff that used to run these operations before April 9, 2003 when Baghdad International Airport was crowded with travelers. What has happened to the experienced and qualified staff that used to operate our airports in Baghdad, Basra, and Mosul? And why don't we make use of their services so they can be employed in this sector and actually work for their salaries?"

SATTERFIELD